

# Spirit of 69

**Skinzine**



## **Sound Men**

**Laurel Aitken**

Fanzine fiction

**SUBBACULTURE Style**

**news Reviews**

**14'6**



# Spirit of 69

Welcome to the third issue of Spirit of 69 skinzine. Well we made it to issue 3, so thanks for everyone who has supported us so far. As before the idea behind the zine is still the same - to promote skinheads and the original spirit of the scene.

We are proud to have Olas Boss, sharing his Sound System experiences in our Soundmen feature. Mick Longshot talks about his early experiences as a young Skinhead in the sixties. We also have part one of our Laurel Aitken feature. Due to unforeseen circumstances, our band interview arrived too late for this issue, but will be back with a vengeance next issue. As ever any contributions are more than welcome, so if you fancy writing a bit please get in touch.

Unfortunately this issue has seen a price rise. Since our good old Government has privatised the postal service, the price has gone up on Postage and that, coupled with paypal fees, left me with little choice but to increase the price. Well I hope you enjoy the zine and please contact us with any comment, good or bad.

Skinhead regards

Toast

Thanks To: Michelle Young, Sue, Olas Boss, Mark Subbaculture, Lee Castle, Mick Longshot, Harry Harrington, The alley Cats, Ric, Jenx, The CheekBonians Brutus Shirts, Dr Martens, Red Stripe

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## Word On the street

BM Music in Soho has now closed, so if you used Dub Vendor Retail, which was situated at the back of the store like I did, you are now out of luck. But it ain't all doom and gloom, Papa Face and Oxman will be relocating. There is no change to Dub Vendor mail order. Spirit of 69 would like to wish them all the best and hope they re-open soon.



The London International Ska fest looks to be a big one this year with Lee Perry and Steel Pulse headlining. Meanwhile, Rocksteady on the River this year features the legendary Derrick Harriott, and judging by last year's boat trip, it will be a gig not to be missed.

Madness this year are embarking on their biggest and greatest open air tour, Grandslam Madness. Starting at the end of May, the Nutty boys are playing 19 dates, finishing in September. Check out [Madness.co.uk](http://Madness.co.uk) to find a date near you.

As you read this, The Selecter are on their Sub Culture tour which finishes at Skamouth in GT Yarmouth at the end of March. They are promoting their new album of the same name.

If you are interested in zines (and you must be if your holding this), check out the facebook page of Bovver Press. It details zines from the past and features some great info and photos of the old zines that helped keep our scene alive.

This year, Ska Shack Radio dj's, are proud to be involved in Ska-Gate, the Ska and Reggae festival in Margate. With help of the Westcoast Bar they have created a ska and reggae scene second to none in the town, with many great acts playing in the seaside town venue. Check out the back page for details. With loads of other festivals of Ska and Reggae across the UK and Europe, its looking good for the scene.

Intensified, the UK's top Traditional Ska Reggae outfit, are playing a number of gigs to celebrate 25 years knocking out the tunes, It seems like only yesterday we saw them play their first gig in the basement club, in Folkestone.

# SUBBACULTURE

I picked up this zine just after finishing issue one and couldn't believe, That some else was making a paper zine, go in touch and decided to do an interview.

**What made you produce and write a zine, especially as it is a paper based zine? Where did you get inspiration from to do a zine, have you done one before, or is this your first outing into zinedom ?**

I've done a few zines over the years for different things I've been intrigued and interested by. I love em. Age dictated that I missed out on punk but when I got into the jam and the mod revival thing I started seeing zines for sale in some of the shops I was seeking out on trips into Birmingham. The main place was a big indoor market called oasis that was an underground warren of small stalls covering all sorts of street styles along with small record stalls. The place was amazing! I started to pick up zines at this time, principally mod zines. Still at school and with nothing but paper round money to spend they were at least something I could afford, a way of digging in to the healthy scene that as going on underground.

The subbaculture thing started after I had been collecting images, photographs mainly from the internet of various street fashion styles that I then started posting on the website I set up. I'd got a bunch of t shirt designs I wanted to get printed up and had originally thought about getting something small printed with text and images for the hang tags but i was putting so much time into writing the thing that it grew and I realised what I really wanted to do was put out an actual zine.

## SUBBACULTURE

### ZINE 3

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What sort of readership did you aim the zine for ?

## SUBBACULTURE

I had no idea, I especially wasn't sure if people would be interested in a zine that covered different stuff. It makes sense that zines cover specific scenes and genres but I thought I might struggle covering the whole notion of youth cults without a specific bent but the response has been pretty good. The big thing for me with zines has always been about a sense of communication, and getting in touch with people, swapping stories and experiences. The best about doing the current zine is the response from right around the world, in the last year I've sold zines and traded emails with people from all over Europe and also America, Canada, Brazil, Australia , it's been good to hear people's stories of how they got in to stuff that began in Britain years ago but that people still fascinated by and relate to. The skinhead thing in particular has surprised me in how far it has reached and how much people from different countries connect with it. Their seems to be some really strong local scenes running nights attracting plenty of smart looking people enjoying some great music which is about as good as it gets for me.

The zine leans toward fashion side of sub cultures and leans toward the Mod side of things, was this your culture from your youth ?

The 2 tone movement at the start of the eighties was the thing that got me started. I was immediately drawn to all those groups - both the music and the clothes - especially The Specials - they looked and sounded amazing. The fact that they came from the midlands was also a bonus. I grew up in a small but rapidly growing town just outside Birmingham and as a twelve year old I was amazed that people from somewhere I knew and had actually been to were in bands and on the telly. That late seventies/early eighties period which, post punk, saw a whole load of revivals kicking off was what really excited me about music and street fashion.

When I moved up to the local comprehensive school it seemed that everyone was into some kind of 'style tribe' each with their own type of music and accompanying fashions. Kids were either mods or rockers or skinheads or teddy

boys. As the 2 tone thing slowed down I became obsessed with the jam and the mod revival but I was intrigued by the way some of the scenes overlapped and looked similar. Around this time I had also picked up some old ska 7"s - not on trojan or any original pressings, these were things picked up in town from W H Smiths who had a section of singles on some reissue label called golden sounds or something equally



# SUBBACULTURE

naff! I was drawn to the original versions I had heard covered by The Specials and Madness and the like but was completely floored by them because of the pace - tracks like liquidator and longshot... I knew from the specials live ep but it took me a while to get my head around how the originals sounded so slow and weird in comparison but I soon got a handle on it.

A big thing for me was getting hold of Nick Knights 'Skinhead' book not so much for his photo essay of the east end skinheads of that time but the jim ferguson illustrations and accompanying text on the fashion changes across those years from 69 to the dawn of the 70's. The discovery of that lineage out of mod into skinhead and back again, the idea of working class kids looking smart was something of a revelation. It somehow crystallised things for me, that all these looks and sounds were linked and I began to search out Ben Sherman's and other stuff that I was reading about. It wasn't easy at the time, with information being so scarce but the idea that their were very specific things to pick up on and search out from charity shops and market stalls seemed incredibly exciting. Early on it was tassled loafers, tonic trousers, button downs and Fred Perry's. My prized possession at school was eventually a cheap crombie styled overcoat in black, fly front with a red liner - used to pull the liner up out of the breast pocket and iron it in to a V to mimic a pocket square! I had no idea what pocket squares were at the time but if it was something you'd seen in a photograph or on an older kid with a load more style you would notice the details and try and emulate it.

## **How important was belonging to a youth culture to you ?**

When I was a kid in school it meant everything. To belong to, for want of a better phrase, a gang was really important. It's a weird time being a teenager and I think at the time it was simply another way for kids to begin to forge their own path out into the wider world. It was great to have stuff like music and clothes in common with a bunch of other people the same age - you could create something not necessarily 'new' but something you felt was your own.

## **How do you feel youth cultures have changed, Do you think that with each generation slowly adds to the mix, diluting the style ?**

It's a weird one. I'm still trying to get to grips with the petering out of the lineage that ran from mod through to skinhead and suedehead styles that seem to get wamped, swallowed up by a confusion of mid seventies, for want of a better word, fashion in the uk. There's a period beginning at the end of 71-72 when things seemed to go awry - a period where the evolving street style continuum seemed to falter and some kind of impetus was lost.

# SUBBACULTURE

As for them changing with successive generations I'm all for the things moving forward. It's difficult, I do understand how people who have remained dedicated to a particular scene get annoyed and frustrated seeing new generations bending the rules and introducing different elements but it's important that things move on. As long as people are recognising stuff from the past with some understanding of the spirit of the thing, where it came from and the times that created it I think is a positive thing. From researching and looking in to all these scenes I've learned a lot about the social history of Britain which I think is pretty important.

## What are your plans for the future of the zine ? Has it done as well as you expected ?

I had no real expectations for the zine when I started, I thought I might be able to shift 50 copies or something but it's been really good. As you know, there's little or more often no money to be made from these types of thing but for me it's all about communicating and sharing experiences and more importantly getting in touch with people who like and obsess over the same things you do. A genuine labour of love.

My initial plan was to simply put out a zine and see what happened, issue 3 is nearly ready and will be out soon. I had been thinking recently of switching to a larger, colour version, almost a proper magazine but then the price goes up and it might be difficult to retain interest but ultimately I love the simplicity of the current zines form in that's its similar to those black ad white, roughly photocopied zines that I bought years ago. For me they shouldn't be too expensive so people can support them easily.

Mark

Subba culture also has an online page check it out at <http://subbaculture.co.uk/>



# THE SPIRIT OF 69

Where Original skins have their say

Mick Jeffries

My first recollection of skinheads was in 1968 when I was 13 years old and all I can remember wearing is a white Tee shirt, braces and either rolled up Army trousers or white painter type trousers. On our feet we had the Luxury of Army boots with the hobnails in them and believe me I was like Bambi on ice on more than one occasion!

I was introduced to Reggae music at about this time by an older boy called Dudley Hilt who lived up the road and was a regular Dj at the G Ranch club in Maidstone where I wasn't quite old enough to attend, but was lucky that Dudley took me with him a couple of times. I spent many a night around his house listening to Reggae music and smoking his cousin's fags - Guards if I remember rightly.

In 1969/70 and in my last year at school, a lot more fashionable clothing came into the scene and I was wearing Levi Sta Prest and white Ben Shermans to school along with Airwair boots. Funny really, I never had called them Doc Martens. It was my school uniform, but I pushed my luck with a silver grey pair that always got me into trouble as they had to be Black or Grey trousers and of course I argued the fact that Silver Grey was Grey in my eyes but it weren't in the Headmaster's. Many a time you would find me sewing buttons on shirt collars to make them look something like Ben Shermans when worn under a V neck jumper or cutting cardboard insoles for my Airwair because I'd worn them that much and the sole had split.

1969 also saw me moving from Maidstone town centre to Shepway Council Estate. Maidstone was and still is made up of little estates some private and some council and it could be very territorial at times, don't know how? Lol I found myself in one or two territorial scuffles shall we say. There were some good boys from Shepway estate and a couple of them were among the best in Maidstone so we held our own on most occasions. Talking about territorial, there's a road in Maidstone called Bluebell Hill which heads into Chatham and the Medway towns and pretty much every time me and my mates went over that hill we would end up rucking,



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because Maidstone and Medway towns never got on at all. I could mention some serious stuff and certain names but I won't and that is what I like about today's scene - the fact that everyone gets on with everyone it's a great scene and long may it live.

Going back to clothes, pretty much all the youngsters in Maidstone, especially the Girls, wore skinhead clothing as the majority of shops were selling it and the other choices were pretty naff, but this didn't mean that everybody was a skinhead. The only problem was that the shops only stocked certain shirts etc so there was a good chance you would go out dressed the same as someone else, so we would travel about to various places to go clothes shopping, some paid for, some not.

The music scene in Maidstone was good. There were lots of places to go - Church halls, youth clubs etc. All had do's on. We were lucky to have the Mood Reaction, the first white reggae band to be signed by Pama Records, from Maidstone and they could be heard at quite a few of these venues and also just along the road. Between Maidstone and Medway was Judge Dread who used to put on gigs as well so we were spoilt a bit.

I would say it was easy being a skinhead back then, but it was certainly an experience! Good mates, some very good mates and complete tossers, but they all made the scene what it was. In my eyes today's scene is very good, but unfortunately not the same, spoilt for me by the fashion police. For me, Skinhead is from the heart and not the wardrobe. This is only my personal opinion of a great scene. I hope to see you all at a do somewhere soon!

**Longshot  
Sounds**

**Longshot  
Sounds**

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Sounds**

# Style STRIDES

This issue we are going to

look at strides, trousers, or as the yanks say, pants and don't ask me why they call them that - when I hear that word it conjures up a pair of skiddy y fronts in my mind. As with anything skinhead fashion wise, different area's had different take on what should be worn and how they were cut etc. So let's start off with Jeans. Levi 501's have always been the daddy, normally Shrink to Fit, although that never really worked properly. The 505 was the next choice, which was the 501 with a zip fly instead of button. Back then, and I'm talking about the late 70's, the jeans seemed to be of a great quality and it was only after those 501 commercials that I felt the 501 had lost something. For us here in England, USA made jeans were always the daddy, but now they are made all over the world the quality seems to vary. I've always found that Belgium made Levi's always seem to have better quality denim. Other choices of jeans were Lee and Wrangler, which to be honest, back in the 80's I never wore, but today the Wrangler cut seem to hold the ironed- in crease much better and they don't seem to twist like Levi's, but its each to their own I suppose. With a number of different cuts available, most wear what they feel good in.

## Turn ups

Over the years online there have been a number of arguments with regards turn ups. In the 80's I, like many others, turned up our jeans depending on the height of the doc's. Jeans were also a lot tighter and the turn ups seemed to hold in place. I used my tip of my thumb to my knuckle as measurement, others were different. Today it seems turn ups are frowned upon in certain areas and it has to be sewn- in turn ups, which in some quarters should be no bigger than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch. I've had a number of arguments about 69 skinheads and sewn- in turn ups and, to be honest, from the pictures they don't look sewn- in. Plus how many skinheads back then could afford 2 or 3 pairs of

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# Style



Levi's to wear at different lengths? So again, that's down to area.

## Bleach Jeans

To me this was late 70's and 80's look, more in line with Oi boys. I wore them back when I was in my teens and enjoyed bleaching them, but for me they were out of vogue by the late 80's and earlier 90's as the gay skinhead scene had adopted them and called them bleachers, along with 14 to 20 hole boots. Most of us then started to dress more in what we thought was in the spirit of 69; smaller boots, and lower turn ups. We were older and the skinhead look of the 80's was now carrying a stigma. Today many choose to wear them, but for me they looked good on a 15 year old not a 50. But that's down to taste, I suppose.

## Sta-prest

For evening wear these are the dogs bollocks. They can go with anything. Once again Levi sta prest are the king, but not the dodgy ones they do nowadays with the weird back pockets. This is followed by Permanent pres. M&S also did a great version and in lots of colours, but these are vintage and can set you back a few quid. In the 80's we picked up our sta press from the market or, if we had the cash, got Lord Anthony, but again that was down to the area you lived in. Today many companies make sta press: Mikkel Rude, Merc, Jump the Gun, Warrior, Relco and Adaptor. They vary in price, quality and of course cut but for me Levi are the daddy.

## Combats

An 80's thing and were mostly green camo. Today with multi camo choices it's again up to the individual. I tend to only wear camo if riding the scooter a long way and, as that rarely happens, they sit in the wardrobe. They are comfortable though. Dress trousers, the light green fatigues with the sewn-in crease and side pockets, looked good with a denim jacket. Some tuck them into their boots with a slight overhang.

# Style

## Tonic's

Tonics, dog tooth and Prince of Wales check in a sta press cut. I can't get my head around Ruperts as they were more boot boy anyway, but if you play golf you can get away with them!

Well I hope you have enjoyed my piece on trousers. As I said, it's a matter of taste and what area you come from that will probably dictate your dress code. I don't think I've missed anything but I'm sure someone will tell me if I have!



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# THE SOUND MEN

This issue of Sound Men brings you Olas Boss, love him or hate him, he has supported the scene, over the last few years. Playing up and down the country and also on the continent. He has worked hard to be where he is now. So here is what he has to say.

The OLAS BOSS UPSETTER SOUND SYSTEM came around the time I was offered to run the Camber Sands Scooter Rally Reggae Room. It was a big moment for me being offered such a prestigious reggae room and I knew that there were far more deserving selectors and sounds around. The fact that I was offered it was significant. Obviously the rumour mill was in overdrive and I had gone behind the backs of the previous sound to get the gig. Not true but since when has the truth got in the way of a good rumour.



If I was going to take over the reggae room, I needed a presence. A sound of my own. This the OLAS BOSS UPSETTER SOUND SYSTEM was born. To be honest, it was a bit of a mish mash of speakers stacked together to create the sound wall. I hadn't just chucked up any old speakers though, I made sure of a good

combination of bass mids and tops, but in essence, it was a bit 'two bob'. They were all three way speakers linked. However, it sounded beautiful. Painting it claret and blue added to it. It was a totally original style and for a first sound, was a good effort. It was running around 6K of power and I ran 4 qsc amps. And to be fair, it served me well, for a good couple of years and saw active service at some great rallies. It never let me down once.

From back in the day, I always wanted my own sound. In my youth I went through the usual punk mod skinhead stage where reggae was always prominent. At the old punk gigs of the 70's there always seemed to be a reggae band in support, and the selectors always seemed to play reggae.

# THE SOUND MEN

Reggae was in my blood early. By the time I was 16, my devotion to reggae was total. I spent a lot of time in sound system culture.

I used to spend a lot of time hanging in Lewisham, New Cross, Peckham, Brixton all the big south London reggae haunts, and more often than not was one of the only white guys in there. It wasn't rare to hear boss reggae, rocksteady or ska either, there was a great mixture of all kinds of reggae on offer. The selectors often played off a single deck, the vibe serious, but it was the sound systems that were my real love. The bass lines and the piercing tops.

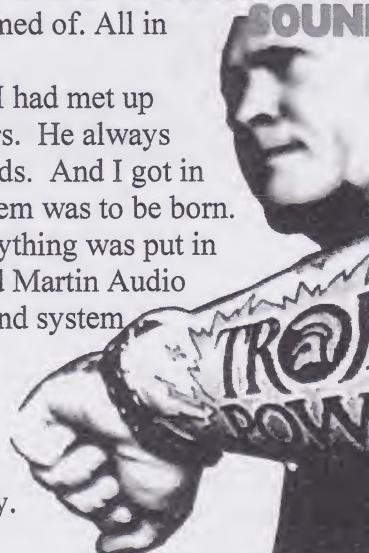
One day I knew I would have a real sound. The first Upsetter Sound System partially took me there, but I still craved the bass. Serious bass. Stomach churning bass. The kind that makes your ears bleed and your kidneys jump up and down. 2014 saw that happen.

Life changes all the time, and for a variety of reasons, the main one having a house far too big, far too expensive for just two of us, meant that I decided to sell. I've been lucky in life that I haven't done too shabby out of property and the house sale meant that I could free up some cash for a few things I had wanted.

One thing topped the list – a new sound. A serious sound. The sound that I had always dreamed of. All in one go.

I knew of Alf (Ligwa) from back in the day and I had met up with him at various places over the past few years. He always made some serious boxes, for some serious sounds. And I got in touch with him. We devised a plan. A new system was to be born. We decided together what I would have and everything was put in place. Over the years I have always loved the old Martin Audio 115's for the look of them, they were proper sound system style. Big mouthed W bins, definitely a visual impact bin, let alone the damage you can cause when they are loaded. I managed to pick up 4 old ones and we refurbished them, put new drivers in and boom, kick bass to hurt you. Badly.

**TOP SELECTER  
SOUND**



We sat those on top of eight eighteen inch sub bass scoop bins. Ligwa has his own demolition drivers 1800 watts of horrific sub bass. Couple with 1000 demolition 15's in the Martins. The tops and mids were boxed together, To be honest, they looked so feeble, when first pictures came out, a few sound men commented that there was nowhere near enough tops or mids to cope with all that bass. Of course, they all knew better from a picture. It tells you so much. Not.

The top and mids were the secret weapon. I won't go into detail, except to say that don't believe everything you see. The use of hidden compression drivers meant that although they might have looked inadequate, they were savage. Eye bleeding. The throw from those four combined boxes was amazing. Enough to cope? Well, truth be known, more often than not I had to control them with more care than the bass section.

It was all driven by Ligwa amps. Solid as a rock, and full of power. It was an amazing rig. Finished off with a ligwa pre amp. It was everything I ever

wanted from a sound. I'm not going to go into frequencies etc because for one thing, it's slightly out of my depth, and secondly, I think it can get too heavy for the average reader.

The first time I took it out for the first play, Ligwa came with me. It was up in Suffolk for the Suffolk Smugglers Rally. Ligwa wanted to set levels and get it sounding just right for the first play out. We played on it for all of 2 minutes before someone came running in telling us that they had received 17 phone calls from local residence. Mind you, we beat that at Big Seven Scooter Rally last year, someone came in to the site at 11pm saying they could hear my bass. One of the Big Seven followed them home, and it was true, they could hear it, 4.8 miles away.



# THE SOUND MEN

Anyway, throughout the weekend I played at Suffolk rally and held it up tight. It was like getting a pint of Fosters Ice, in 90 degrees, and not being allowed to have more than a few sips.

Throughout the summer of 2014 the system played out at quite a few of the big rallies and generally went down very well. It looked stunning, and sounded the same way.

The highlights of 2014 and the rig are numerous, but the full to bursting point of my reggae rooms at Santa Pod, and Big Seven will live with me forever. The sound system was pounding all night, there was a brilliant crowd in both and the vibe second to none. They were seriously good Nights.

I play my way, and that doesn't go down well with some of the purists, but I like to mix up my reggae. I love crowd sing-alongs, those big tunes that bring smiles out. It's no bad thing. Some people want to hear hard core rare skinhead reggae, and that's great, some like to listen to ska all night, again, horses for courses. Me, I like to mix things up and have a lot of fun.

I'm very lucky because I get invited to play all over the country as well as in Europe and further afield. I run quite a few reggae rooms at rallies and try to include as many other selectors as I can. That way, the purest's can get their hard core as well as their not so hard core. I try to make sure there is a good combination of selectors at most events.

Reggae is my love, all reggae. Always has been, and what I try to do when I play out is bring in a little bit of reggae from outside the norm. And to be truthful, I haven't yet hit a brick wall. I've got a very healthy record collection, a lot of real hardcore boss, and rocksteady, and quite a few tasty ska tunes too. But I also carry a fair selection of early 70s, tunes people know that broke out into the mainstream.

I play lots of pub gigs, which attract a myriad of people. I mix my nights up, playing at least three quarters of the night traditional boss sounds. I mix it up with a bit of lovers rock and a bit of commercial. Does it work? Well, I have residencies in 4 different counties so someone likes it.

But don't be fooled, I can play hard core when I need to. And love doing so too.

Over 2014 I started to bring a few guest personal appearances into my

# THE SOUND MEN

nights. I do a roots and dub radio show, as well as a boss radio show, and through both, I had had people contact me, sending me stuff, hooking up with me and I have tried to bring them into my nights. Again, it's bringing new music to the people. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. But back in the day, plenty of people helped me along the way, and if I can do the same for others, that's no bad thing. It adds to a night sometimes to have a live performer as well as a selector.

I've also introduced an MC on occasions, MC TROOPER from Jah Releation Muzic. No different to the great DJ MC'S of the day. I love the musical theatre of it all. I'm a showman selector, and I'll never change. It's who I am.

I get accused of doing too many gigs, overkill. I see it completely opposite. I think I have taken reggae music to a whole new audience. Most of the pub gigs I do, when I first played in there, they weren't really having reggae, but I have brought them through with popular tunes, then introduced boss reggae. Now its all about boss reggae with everything else on the edge.



# THE SOUND MEN

There are many events on every week, all over England, all over the UK, all over Europe, all over the world. It means that at last, people have the choice of where to go and what to listen to. In England we have some of the very best boss reggae selectors in the world. In the south east, we are SPOILED indeed. Some wonderful selectors, and some wonderful events. If anything the scene is getting bigger.

Sure, some people would rather it stayed small and tight, but for me, the bigger picture is the survival of both the skinhead and reggae scene full stop. More people who hear our music the better. 2014 was a dreadful year for losing reggae artists and we can keep them alive by playing their music forever. And new people hearing the music can only mean good things, surely?

Anyway, the end of 2014 saw the theft of the OLAS BOSS BUS! My van was thieved. So what? Well, unfortunately it was loaded, with my complete sound system. I lost the lot. Speakers, amps, cables, my mini stage, my beloved tonic suits. Everything. However, my records and turntables were safe, and some of the old claret and blue system has been in storage so it meant I could carry on.

Gutted? You bet your bollocks I'm gutted. Made me laugh the stories of it being an insurance job. The sound wasn't insured. Let's do the math, van cost 15 grand, sound and the rest of the van's contents close to £30 grand, and I stand to get back about £8 grand. Fucking wonky insurance job, that's for real.

But, I'll tell you one thing, it won't stop me. Not a fucking chance. I've carried on, not missed any of my booked gigs, and I'm already making plans for a new sound. So many people offered me help, both financial and loans as well as a facebook campaign to generate some money for me too. How humbling, truly.

The OLAS BOSS UPSETTER SOUND SYSTEM may be no more, but keep your eyes open, variant number three won't be too far away. No one keeps the OLAS BOSS down. You can steal my sound, you can steal my van, you can steal my suits, but you can't steal my belief, you can't steal my passion, you can't steal OLAS BOSS.

ONE LOVE

## Fanzine fiction Match Day

Dean looked at the clock on the mantelpiece above the coal fire. He was late. He continued to lace up his boots and then slowly roll up his Levis, using the tip of his thumb as a gauge to get the turn up just right. He stood up, shook himself to adjust his bollocks, then hooked up his braces over his shoulder. He rearranged his plain white shirt and looked in the mirror. His number 2 crop with a razor parting looked crisp. He grabbed his denim jacket and headed for the door shouting bye to his mur as he closed it. A muffled reply of "Be careful!" came back.

It was match day and he was late. West Ham were away to Everton and due to lack of funds the boys had decided on a trip to Leyton Orient. In fact, Dean preferred it here; it made the firm stand out. At West Ham they just became part of the Mile End mob.

Dean arrived in Leyton and hurried past a gathering group of Brighton supporters, who eyed the solitary skinhead with suspicion. He made his way to the Three Blackbirds, up the High Road, He walked into the Public bar that was filled with a haze of smoke and a large contingent of supporters. Pausing to look for his mates, in the far corner he saw his mob, a cluster of shaven heads and Harringtons. "Hello lads" he said as he walked up to them.

"Stevie is at the bar. If you're quick he'll get one in for you," the smallest lad said. Dean looked over and caught Stevie's eye. "Pint of Eagle!" he shouted. Stevie nodded back. Dean pulled out a Number 6 and offered the packet round, just as Stevie stumbled back from the bar with a tray in hand. "Where the fuck have you been?" the largest of the group said.

"Calm down Paul. Didn't check the time, did I?" Dean replied

"Well, you want hang round with the bigger boys, make sure you're not late."

Paul scowled back and then continued to speak to his other friend that Dean didn't recognise.



## Fanzine fiction

"Ignore him" said Stevie "I reckon he's worried Brighton have a handy team and I'm pretty sure there's a few up here today. I think they realise that some of the Mile End mob might be here and that's a good little pop at West Ham. They can go home and boast about it - that's if they have us." Stevie said.

Dean supped on his ale. He was looking forward to today, a get together and piss up. He hadn't really expected trouble. Last time Paul was on one they had walked round the ground four times with him going on about how they had to show how tough they were. No one started; it had been a waste of time and they had missed half the game.

Dean looked over to Gary and John. "So how did your South London foray go?" "Well, we got battered and met some girls on the bus back. Ended up in a West End club though, so not all bad. How's it been down your way?" Gary asked.

"Fucking nightmare! That nutter Joe Hawkins has caused some trouble and skinheads are public enemy number one. Two pubs wouldn't serve me"

"That's not cos you're a skinhead, it's your baby face!" they laughed. Paul looked over and glared. They laughed more.

"Right, drink up." Paul said. "It's time to show who's who." The lads started to down their pints and adjusted their jackets. They walked out of the pub.

Now life kinda throws these strange quirks of fate and today was no exception. Paul walked out of the door right into the path of skinhead bigger than him, but not just any skinhead, Brighton and Hove's top boy Nigel, or Nasty Nigel as he is known. Now Nigel sees the skinhead, knows he's not Brighton, so whacks the fucker in the face. What happens next is truly bizarre. Dean steps forward and uppercuts Nigel and then it goes off. Paul hits the floor, Nigel's legs go and he slumps. Dean smacks him as he's going down and follows it with a kick before another boy grabs him by the collar and head butts him in the face.

Dean's nose splits and as he tries to recover the lad is gone as Stevie is smacking him about the head. Some of the Brighton boys have either not realised what has happened or just hesitated, as they are just standing there and appear to be watching the carnage as the two groups of skinheads punch and kick each other.

Meanwhile, Paul and Nigel are still on the floor as the pub empties from both the saloon and the public bar. Dean stumbles back and an old boy steadies him. "Take it easy son," he says, as he steps past him into the melee. From over the street, more Brighton run across and it's really off. Dean sees Stevie who is cut above the eye. The others, Gary and John, stumble out of the mob and Paul is being helped up by his mate. They are all moving away from the pub.

Nasty Nigel sees Dean and starts to gun towards him, only to be stopped by an old man in his fifties with a punch that sends him backwards into the crowd of fighting men.

"Time to leave I think!" says Stevie and the small group of friends start to move away as the sirens begin to blare.

# Laurel Aitken The Godfather of Ska

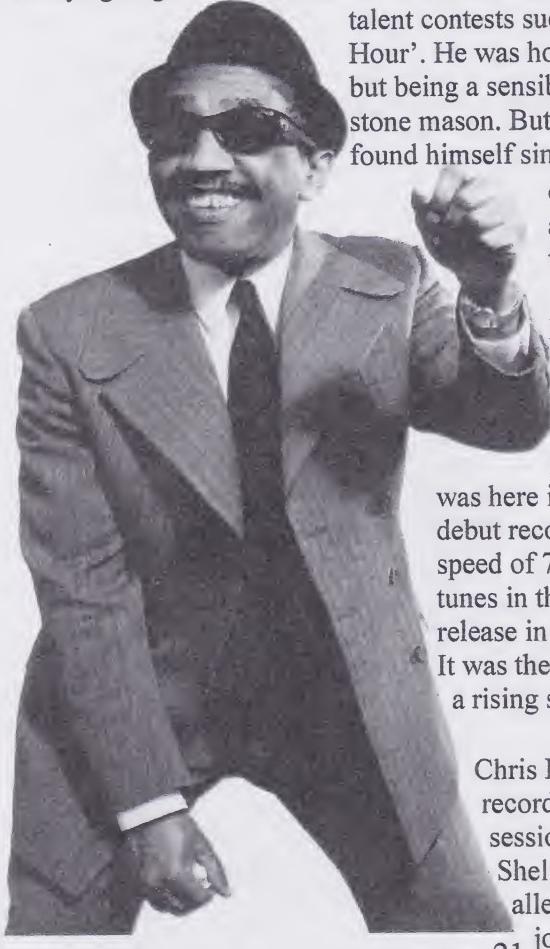
The Godfather of Ska, the High Priest of Reggae. Little did Lorenzo Aitken know these were what he would become known as when he played Mento and Calypso for tourists arriving in Kingston Harbour. To be honest, I was quite surprised how little information there was on the great man as I sourced this article. In depth sleeve notes and a few interviews helped me patch it together.

Lorenzo Aitken (or Oliver Stephens has also been cited) was born in Cuba (or Panama, depending on what you read) way back in 1927. His lineage was both Cuban and Jamaican, and in 1938 his family moved to Jamaica. Music was always going to be his vocation; it was in his bones. Laurel would perform at local

talent contests such as Vere John's 'Opportunity Hour'. He was honing his vocal and dancing skills, but being a sensible person, he also trained as a stone mason. But this was not to be and Laurel soon found himself singing and dancing around the island on the hotel and club circuit, as well as working at his Kingston Harbour tourist job.

Back then, Rock and Roll and R&B was the music that was flowing in from the USA. Laurel was approached by Stanley Motta who ran Motta's recording studios and it was here in 1957 that Laurel recorded his debut record on to the sacred black wax at a speed of 78rpm. He recorded a number of tunes in this calypso R&B vein and some saw release in the UK on the Kalypso record label. It was these releases that were making Laurel a rising star in Jamaica.

Chris Blackwell approached Laurel to record for him and, along with the Caribs session band, they laid down 'Little Shelia' and 'Boogie in my Bones'. It is alleged that Mr Earnest Ranglin also joined the band for the session. Chris



# Laurel Aitken

released them on his R&B label in Jamaica and they appeared on Starlight in the UK. The single was a hit in the JA Charts and more were released including 'Drinkin Whiskey' and 'Honey Girl'.

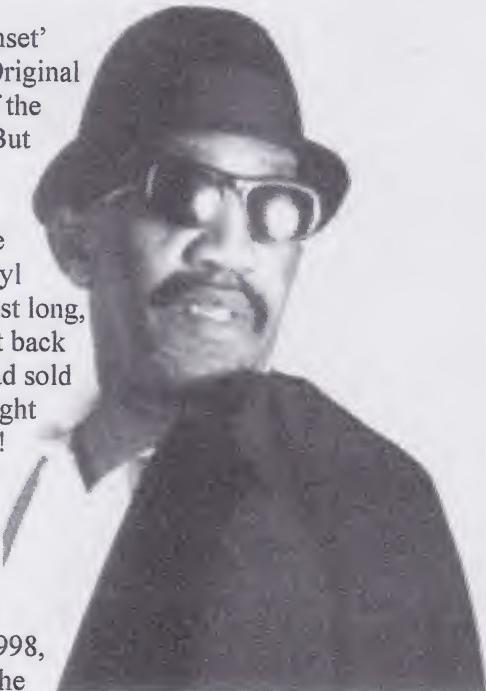
Laurel was then approached by Duke Reid to release some boogie R&B releases in the form of 'Judgement Day' Blue Beat bb14 and 'More Whiskey'. But by the winter of 1960, Laurel was looking across the Atlantic to find fame and Mr Aitken left for the UK. He signed up to Emil Shalit's Melodisc records. His early session for the label included 'Bartender'. He continued over the next year to record for BlueBeat using ex Jamaicans and English musicians, bringing the sound of Jamaica to the UK. All the while, Laurel continued to record, saving up to finance a trip back to Jamaica to record.

He funded a number of sessions at the Federal Studios, some of which were with The Skatalites. These ska sides saw releases on both Chris Blackwell's R&B label and the newly formed Rio label here in the UK. As ska went international due to the Millie Small hit 'My Boy lollipop', Laurel was in demand. Decca Records grabbed the

Rio tracks and released 'After the Sunset' here in the UK and renamed it 'The Original Cool Jamaican Ska' in the USA. Half the tracks on the album were by Laurel. But it was the album 'Ska With Laurel', released in 1966, that did it for me.

When I first saw this album it was like the Holy Grail and as I played the vinyl the excitement grew. Alas, it didn't last long, as after I had taped it, my mate took it back and posted it off to Japan where he had sold it for 300 quid which was about the right price at the time. Still, what an album!

Released on the Rio label, it features 12 tracks and rumour has it Laurel only had the cover himself as he misplaced or some had purloined the vinyl years before. The Long Hot Summer CD, released by Grover in 1998, features 15 recordings of Laurel and the



# Laurel Aitken

Skatalites and is well worth hunting down. Laurel was now Britain's favourite ska act and, with the backing band The Bees, toured the country. The Bees later went on to be the Pyramids and Symarip. In the four or so years that Laurel had been living in Britain, he had released over 40 records on BlueBeat Columbia BlueBeat, Rio, R&B, Melodisc, Dice and Rainbow.

### *Laurel Albums to check out from this period.*

**You Got Me Rockin': The Best Of the BlueBeat Years 1960-1964 (Pressure Drop)**  
28 track compilation that features a number of BlueBeat and Dice releases, some of which are pre ska. It's an excellent collection of early Jamaican R&B and British Jamaican R&B, as well as excellent sleeve notes by Big Phil.



**Laurel Aitken and the Skatalites: The Long Hot Summer (Grover Records)**  
15 tracks recorded in Jamaica in 1963 with backing by the Skatalites. This features some top tunes that saw release on Rio, Island and Black Swan labels.

### **The Original Cool Jamaican Ska (Pressure Drop)**

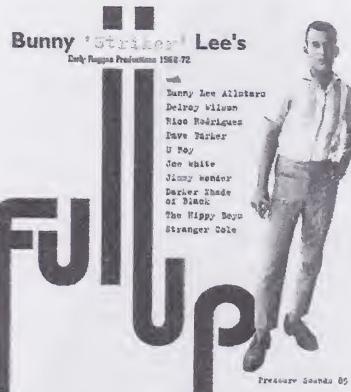
A 28 track cd that features Laurel with 9 recordings from the original compilation LP 'Cool Ska'. This CD also features tracks from the Federal Studio records with the Skatalites. Once again, Pressure Drop have done it justice with great sleeve notes and it includes the Columbia release of 'Don't Stay Out Late'.

### **Ska with Laurel. (Pressure Drop)**

The Legendary Rio LP of twelve tracks with bonus tunes taking it up to 27. This is British Jamaican ska at its best. The bonus tracks include some of his Ska Beat records, as well as some of his BlueBeat.

Next Issue Laurel Aitken High Priest Of Reggae

# Reviews



## Various - Full Up: Bunny 'Striker' Lee's Early Reggae Productions 1968-72

A double LP for Pressure sounds that is pure quality. 21 cuts of pure gold. Pressure Sounds know how to put out a great album and this has two slabs of fine wax. With top tunes and versions of them you can't go Wrong. I couldn't find a duff tune on it, but at the same time I do have the tunes on other cd's but its nice having them on vinyl all be it an LP. Would be nice if Bunny put Out a 7" box set collection.

### Side One:

1. Bunny Lee Allstars - Ivan Itler The Conqueror
2. Dave Barker - Smooth & Sorts
3. Rico Rodriguez & Tommy McCook - Going West
4. Bunny Lee Allstars - Joe Lewis
5. Bunny Lee Allstars - Scarface

### Side Three:

11. Stranger Cole - When I Get My Freedom
12. Roy Richards - Death Rides A Horse
13. Winston Williams & Pat Kelly - Sweet Like Candy
14. Don Lee & Lester Stirling - Peyton Place
15. Bunny Lee Allstars - Full Up
16. Bunny Lee Allstars - Hook Up

## Various - The Deejays Meet Downtown 1975-1980 (Voice Of Jamaica)

Heavy weight vinyl of DJ sounds, 13 cuts in all. I'll be honest I'm not a big fan of latter Dj stuff, but this album has some great tunes on it. Worth a look

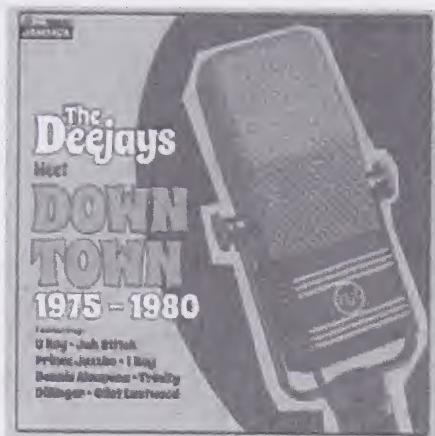
1. Dillinger - Cocaine In My Brain
2. Dr Alimantando & Jah Stitch - The Barber Feel It
3. U Roy - Hold On
4. I Roy - War & Friction
5. Dillinger - Roots Natty Congo
6. Prince Jazzbo - Good Memories
7. Big Joe - In The Ghetto
8. Dennis Alcapone - It Must Come
9. Jah Stitch - Bury The Barber
10. Little Joe - Tradition Skank
11. Trinity - Kendal Crash
12. Dillinger - Daylight Saving Time

### Side Two:

6. Delroy Wilson - Drink Wine
7. Joe White - Someone To Call My Own
8. U Roy - Wet Vision
9. Bunny Lee Allstars - Daydream
10. Rico Rodriguez - Japanese Invasion

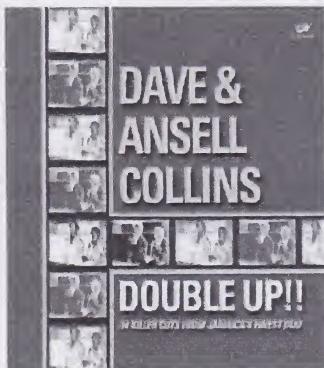
### Side Four:

17. Jimmy Wonder - Stealing In The Name Of The Lord
18. Delroy Wilson & Lizzie - Double Attack
19. The Hippy Boys - Death Rides A Horse
20. Bobby James & Dave Barker - You Said It
21. Darker Shade Of Black - War



# Reviews

## Dave & Ansell Collins - Double Up!! (Kingston Sounds) LP



14 tracks produced by Bunny Lee, released on Kingston sounds, good heavy wax, but what are the tunes like, well it's a mixed batch of original cuts and more modern versions, as in Dave djing over old rhythms. Liquidator shuffle is definitely a more modern cut but still sounds traditional, and as such it ain't a bad tune. But OH baby fails which is a shame, Queen of the Minstrel sounds more roots and Mr Talkative misses the mark. Not a bad album but misses the 14 killer cuts it claims to be.

### Side One:

1. Liquidator Shuffle
2. 007 (Both Barrells)
3. Just Can't Stand It (Man Next Door)
4. Johnny Dollar
5. The Beatitude
6. Great Shocks Of Mighty
7. Girl Of My Dreams

### Side Two:

8. Oh Baby (Django Returns)
9. Queen Of The Minstrel
10. Mister Talkative
11. Riding For A Fall
12. Trying To Conquer Me
13. Sexy Dream
14. Hot Sauce

## Dandy Livingstone - The Vault Is Open (Par 3 Music) LP

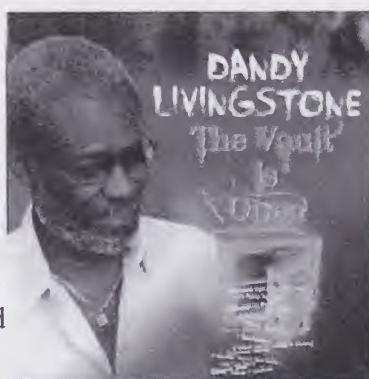
I had high hopes when I saw this album. But It misses the mark. The best way to describe this album, is songs written in the early 70's, then recorded now. The sound is too modern, so it just don't work, which is a shame So this is really only for collectors a real missed opportunity.

### Side One:

1. Telephone Call From The Devil
2. Let's Party Together
3. Message To Rudy ft Jack Radics
4. My Yout'
5. A Woman's Love
6. Talking 'Bout Ska
7. Flat On My Face ft Trevor 'Scatta' Bonnick

### Side Two:

1. I Surrender
2. If What We're Doing Is Wrong
3. Glamma Mama
4. I Wanna Touch You Baby ft Trevor 'Scatta' Bonnick
5. Ska Luv Rock
6. Eljoyro Ska (Instrumental)
7. Keep It Locked (Instrumental)



# Reviews Singles



## The CheekBonians "Boss"

4 track Ep from this Swiss band, the a side features Freaks and Stronger. Freaks is a slow bouncy tune that reminds me of the early 90's. Stronger is a protest song that has some great organ work. On the Flip Is Reggae City and Down and out. Its a great debut Ep and worth checking out. Its good to see bands playing original tunes, rather than covers. Check them out on facebook



## Hippy Boys - Death Rides A Horse / Lloydie & Mellotones - Lover Come Back (Big Sax / Reggae Fever)

Released by Reggae fever, a reissue of two great Songs. Lover Come back is a jerky soulful tune, that should have anyone shuffling on the dance floor, while Death Rides a Horse is a slow tempo, spaghetti western inspired tune that is a different cut from the amalgamated version.

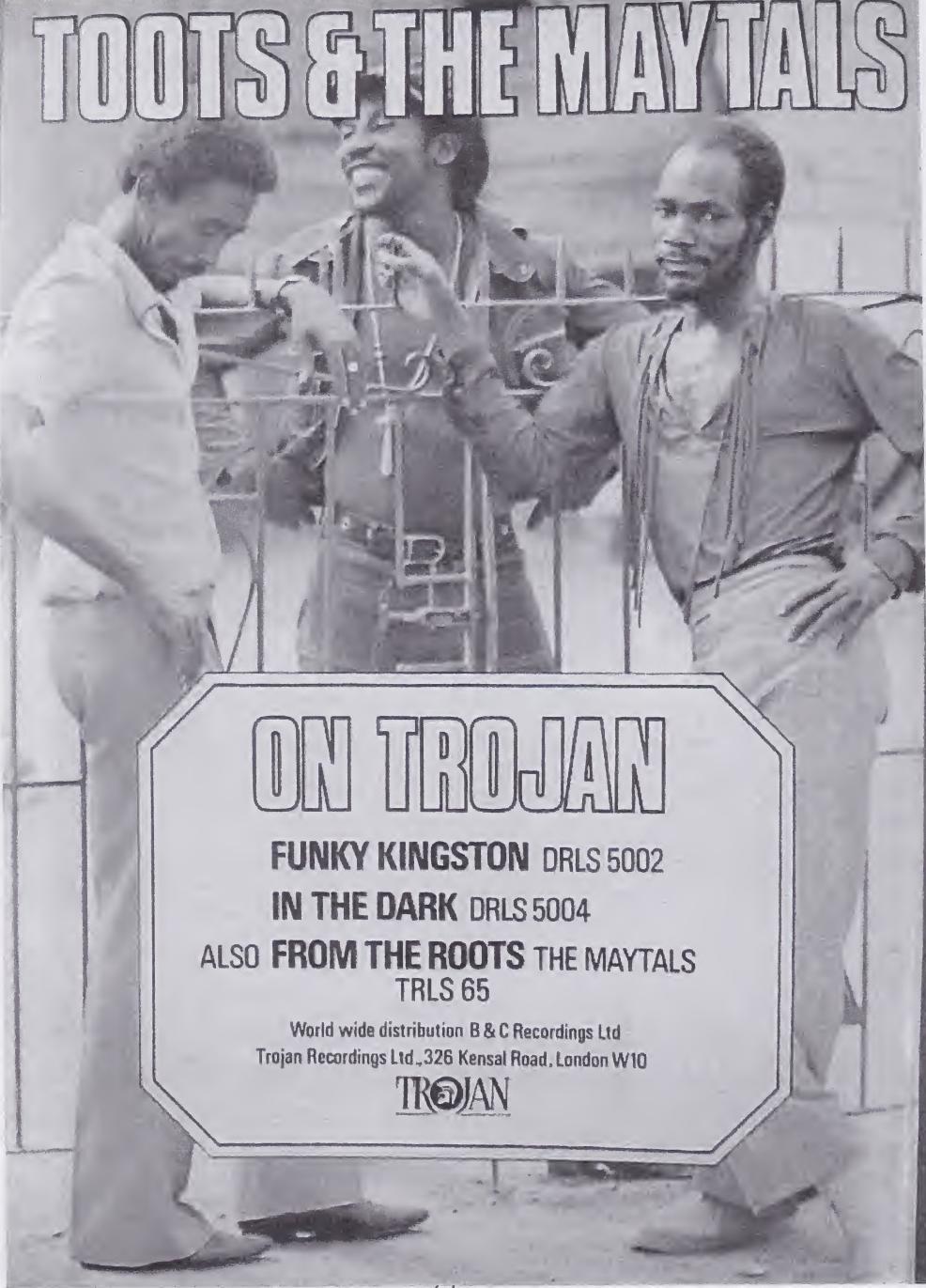


Dennis Alcapone - Teach The Children / Wake Up Jamaica  
Stranger Cole - Crying Every Night / Tommy McCook - Mighty Alley  
Termites - Love Up Kiss Up / Techniques - I Wish It Would Rain  
Three Tops - Do It Right / Three Tops & Phyllis Dillon - Do It Right  
(Soul Take)

Techniques - Travelling Man / Errol Brown - Dreads Leaving Babylon  
(Dub) (Treasure Isle / Buy Reggae) EU 7"

The second set from the German Mail order company, Buy Reggae, on heavy wax and all great tunes.

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# ND MEN

the time I was 16, my devotion to me in sound system culture.

ng in Lewisham, New Cross, Peckham, reggae haunts, and more often than not there. It wasn't rare to hear boss here was a great mixture of all kinds of en played off a single deck, the vibe ms that were my real love. The bass

al sound. The first Upsetter Sound t I still craved the bass. Serious bass. that makes your ears bleed and your saw that happen.

a variety of reasons, the main one expensive for just two of us, meant cky in life that I haven't done too use sale meant that I could free up vanted.

sound. A d always dreamed of. All in

n the day and I had met up e past few years. He always e serious sounds. And I got in n. A new system was to be born. have and everything was put in s loved the old Martin Audio ere proper sound system itely a visual you can cause o pick up 4 , put new hurt you. Badly.

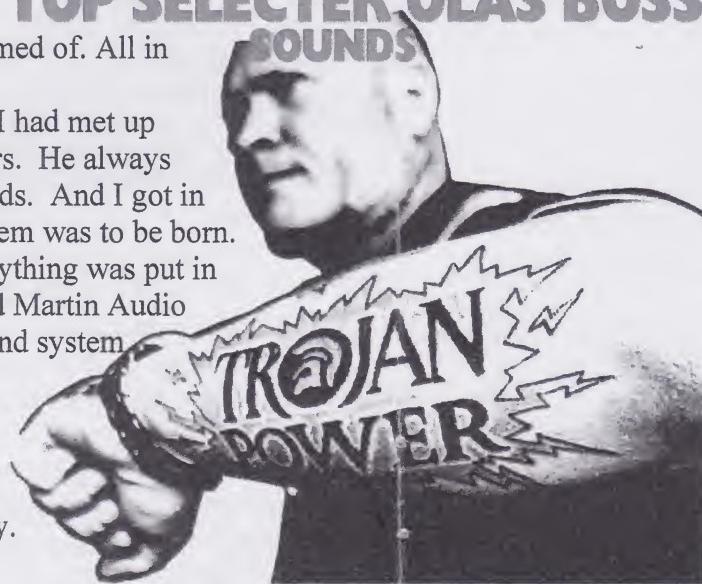
We sat those on top of eight eighteen inch sub bass scoop bins. Ligwa has his own demolition drivers 1800 watts of horrific sub bass. Couple with 1000 demolition 15's in the Martins. The tops and mids were boxed together, To be honest, they looked so feeble when first pictures came out, a few sound men commented that there was nowhere near enough tops or mids to cope with all that bass. Of course, they all knew better from a picture. It tells you so much. Not.

The top and mids were the secret weapon. I won't go into detail, except to say that don't believe everything you see. The use of hidden compression drivers meant that although they might have looked inadequate, bleeding. The throw from those four combin to cope? Well, truth be known, more often th with more care than the bass section.

It was all driven by Ligwa amps. Solid as a r an amazing rig. Finished off with a ligwa pre

## TOP SELECTER OLAS BOSS

SOUNDS



wanted from a sound frequencies etc because out of my depth, and heavy for the average. The first time I took it came with me. It was Smugglers Rally. Lig get it sounding just ri played on it for all of came running in tellin phone calls from loca beat that at Big Seven someone came in to t could hear my bass. them home, and it wa 4.8 miles away.